FIRST COMICS
WARP
SEPT. $1.00
NO. 16
$1.25 CANADA
BRUSTOVICH '84
CHAOS STRIKES!
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warped words

%FIRST COMICS,
1014 DAVIS STREET, EVANSTON, ILLINOIS 60201

In the issue #12 lettercol, Mr. Mike brought up the issue of $1.00 Mando comics vs. $1.50 Baxter comics. We received several letters on this subject; but since they all said virtually the same thing — "Don't change to the higher priced spread" — I decided not to run any of them. An arbitrary editorial decision, but then I'm the editor.

All kidding aside, the issue of paper and price is a complicated one, and not one that lends itself to simple solutions. Baxter paper may be right for some titles and totally inappropriate for others — and Baxter and Mando are not the only choices. We are constantly reviewing all the possibilities, and your input is greatly appreciated.

Dear Mike, et al.:

I have been waiting for years for Jerry Bingham to work on a regular series, and now he is turning out some of his best ever work. Is there any chance that you could chain him to his drawing board and make him ink his own pencils as well? (Please skip the plug for his graphic novel Beowulf.)

I hope you can convince Bill Willingham to do some more work for you. He is, after all, the only reason I bought those particular issues.

Tom Latham
Lindisfarne, Linden Gardens
Leatherhead, Surrey
KT22 7HB U.K.

Your wish is my command. I will refrain from plugging **Jerry Bingham's** *terrific, stupendous, magnificent, beautiful graphic novel* **BEOWULF** *which is available at your local comics shop. As for* **Bill Willingham** *... Gee, I don't know. Maybe we'll give him an entire issue of* **Warp** *and see how it looks.*

Dear Mike and/or Rick:

The Warp story in issue #12 featured alien insects running human-copy robots, a fierce talking dragon changed into a not-so-fierce talking dragon, a magical other-dimensional lord caught in a time-trap in Smalltown, USA, and a half-man/half-monkey being tossed into outer space. If you think I can dream up something about all that to say, then you must be as crazy as writer Peter Gillis is (or is in the process of becoming).

Let's turn instead to the back-up, Outrider. Here, we have a stranger in an empty Fen-Ra accompanied by a giant dimension-spanning pigeon who used to be his lover. Say, did Gillis write this one too? Yep. Well, gosh, if you think, etc., etc.

This was one *strange* issue. It's a good thing I like a little strangeness, *once* in a while.

T.M. Maple
Box 1272, Station B.
Weston, Ontario M9L 2R9

You're right T.M.; we'll try to tone it down in the future. So next issue, Cumulus gets bitten by a radioactive guppy and turns into a huge, stupid green guy with pants that don't fit; Chaos becomes an alcoholic and hands over the mantle of madness to Symax; and Sargon develops multiple personalities and forms her own superhero team.

Dear Mick:

Living as I am (and hopefully you are) in the post-nuclear-holocaust-age (you can bet my postperson will get a bottle of low-contamination moonshine from me next Xmas for keeping the deliveries coming from Frist Comics) it is so important that our fiction keeps in touch with both the nitty gritty and the nutty. Wrap Comics, your keenest book, has it all.

Before the bombs started to fall Wrap didn't really seem to click into the ol' grey matter area. But (as we forget proper grammar) in retrospecs, one can see that Wrap gave us cowboys and fruit. Nice art but not enough right angles, and boyhowdy it was just a wee bit slow moving. Since Brunner was atomized with the rest of Nueva Yorca, I'm pleased as plutonium with the nifty labours of Gillis & Bingham. Bugs in the brain are just what I needed while the glow dims. Surprises! Humour! Golly gosh, Mick, keep that Gillis feline on this funny page.

Not quite finally, a few complaints about Wrap. Like, Chaos is no madder (in the hatter sense) than President Jesse. A misplaced sense of values, but overall he's my type of Americamando. Your idea of "sexy" is tame (although the thing with the dog was cute). And what about the distinct lack of that which rocks and rolls all nite long???

Please don't print this letter in Swahili since I can't, nay, won't read it. Oh yeah, if I become the Prince of Atlantis would you cancel my prescription? All billwiggy aside, Wrap will always be Frist on my list.

The Gringo Kid

I'm sorry. You must have the wrong number.

NEXT MONTH: While Cumulus deals with Chaos in Cynosure, Sargon leads an interstellar battle fleet into a cataclysmic ... defeat? But the story of the beleaguered Mistress of War continues as she joins forces with the Outrider in the back-up feature! Events are set in motion that will soon bring our multi-faceted cast together in an ominous reunion.

— Rick Oliver

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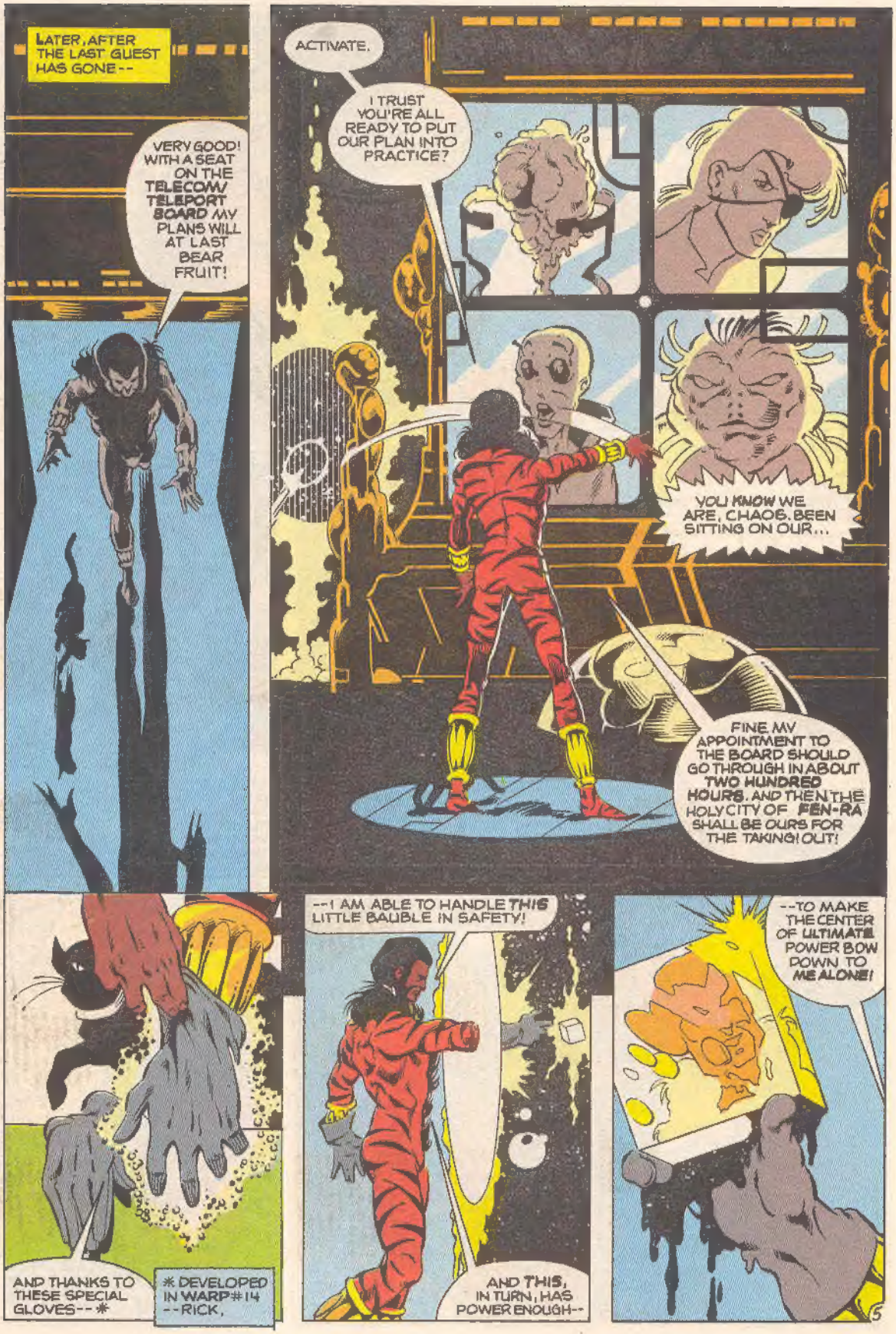
A FIRST COMICS PUBLISHING PRODUCTION

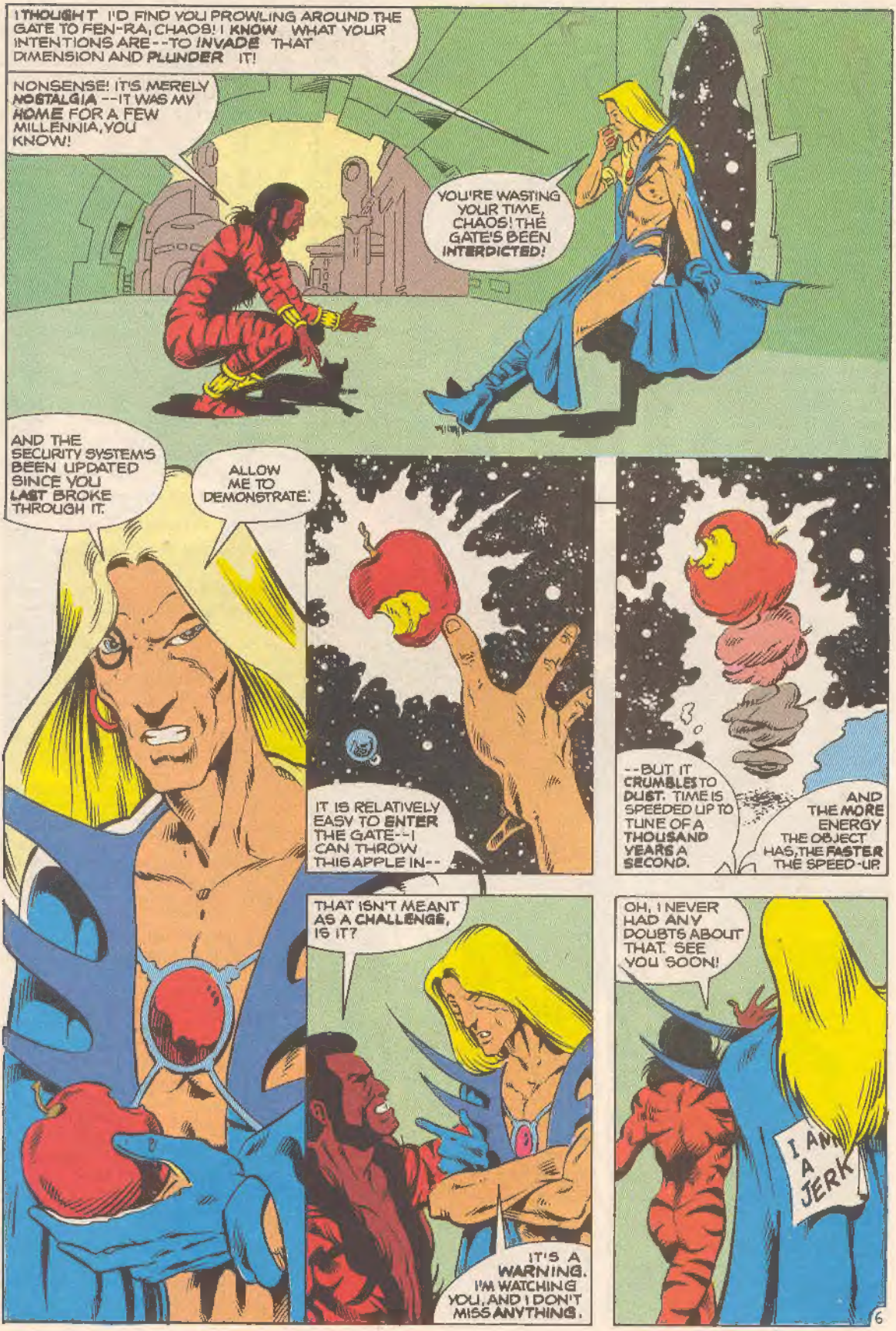
WARP™
A NIGHT IN CYNOSURE!
HELLO THERE! SO VERY GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT!
YOU'RE JUST IN TIME -- THE PARTY'S JUST BEGINNING!
PETER B. GILLIS
STORY
BILL WILLINGHAM
PENCILS
MIKE GUSTOVICH
INKS
RICK TAYLOR
LETTERS
JANICE COHEN
COLORS
RICK OLIVER
EDITOR
BASED ON CHARACTERS AND CONCEPTS CREATED BY STUART GORDON & BURY ST. EDMUND

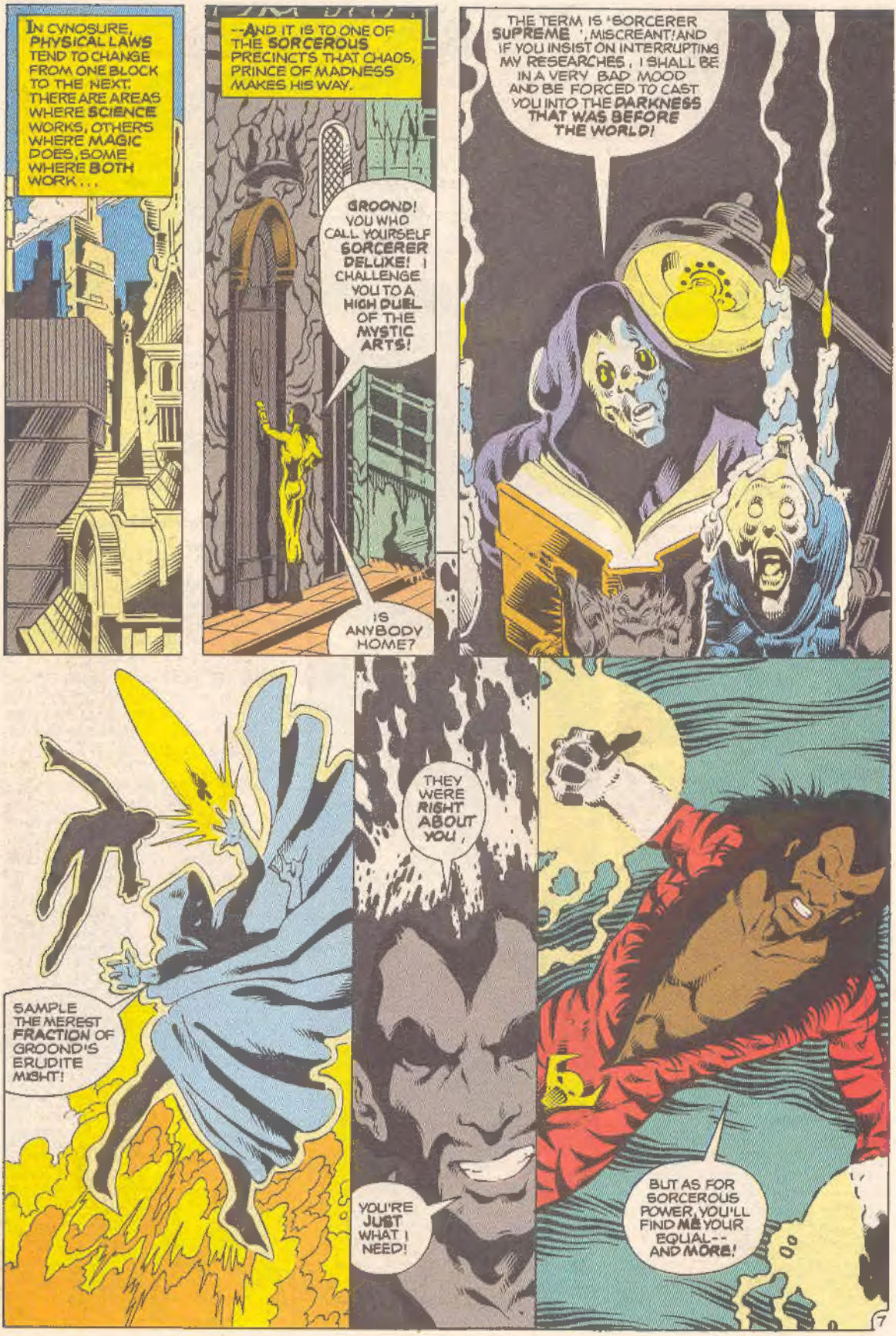
PLACE: QUITE A / HAVE YOU: HERE! CHAOS: PRINCE
YES, ISN'T IT! BOUGHT IT OFF THE LAST PRINCE OF A DYING RACE FOR A SONG!
THE GUESTS ARE JUST ABOUT TO SIT DOWN TO TABLE--WE'RE SERVING COCKTAILS.
MR. MART
PANDIMENSIONAL CITY OR NO, IT SEEMS TO ME CYNOSURE HAS BEEN JUST DYING FOR A GOOD PARTY! I'M OVERWHELMED AT THE RESPONSE!
OF COURSE YOUR SEATS ARE UP NEAR THE HEAD OF THE TABLE, IF YOU'LL FOLLOW ME--!
YOUR GRACE, PLEASE! HAVE PATIENCE!
1

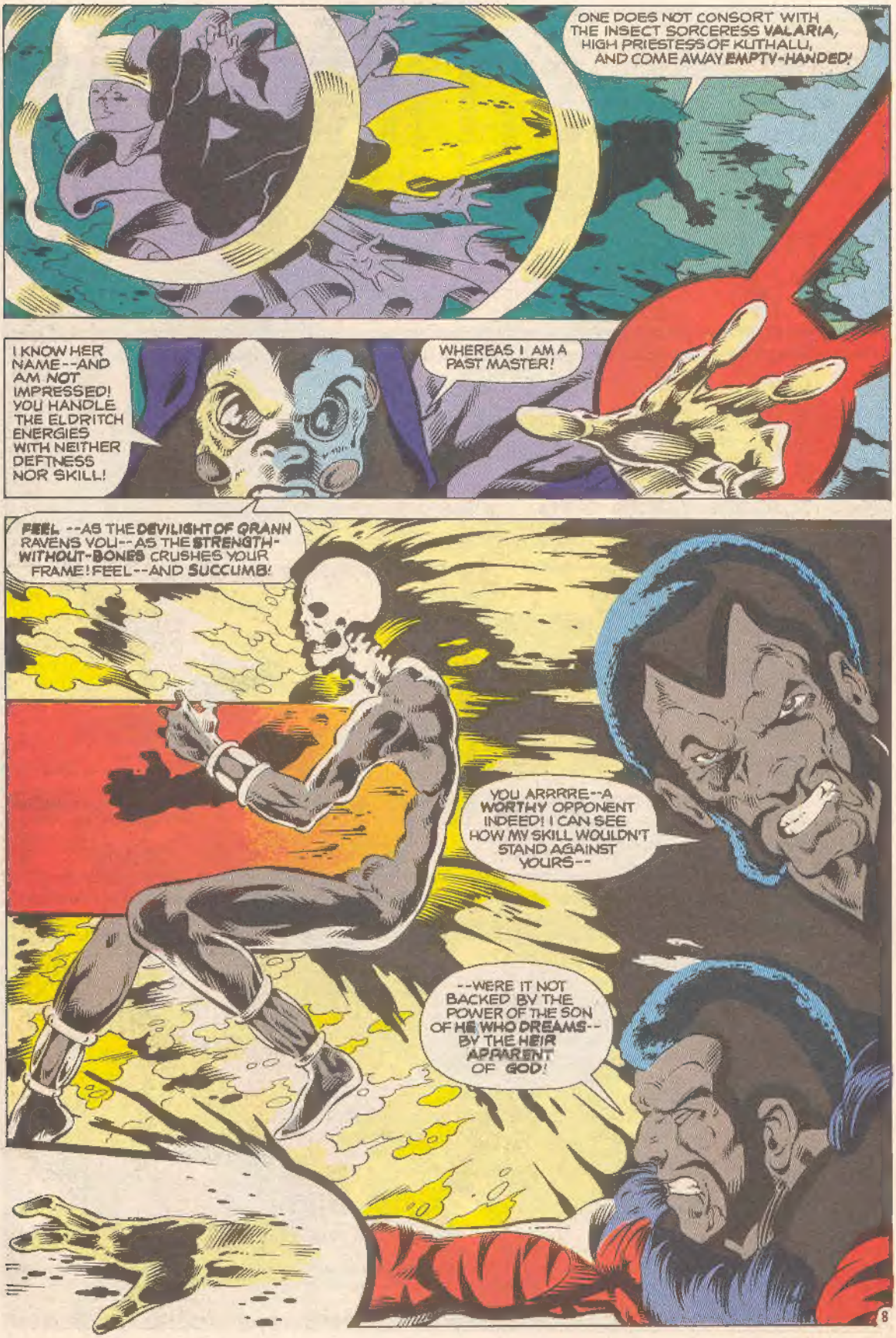
PLEASE, YOUR GRACE, THESE ARE GUESTS.
?
YES, YES, INDEED THEY ARE. YOUR MEAL WILL BE SERVED SHORTLY.
SIGH I HAVE TRIED TO ARRANGE THE SEATING SO THAT NO GUESTS ON THE SAME FOODCHAIN ARE SEATED TOGETHER, BUT... EH?
GUESS WHO?
YOU DARLING, CHAOS! I LOVE YOU!
I'M SO GLAD YOU INVITED ME!
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU INVITED ME, CHAOS-- BUT I'M WARNING YOU--
DON'T TRY USING THIS PARTY AS A SMOKESCREEN. MY MEN ARE ON TRIPLE ALERT.
EVERYTHING'S SO DULL AROUND OUR PLACE-- WE NEVER SEE ANY-- BODY!
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK SOMETHING'S GOING TO HAPPEN? A PARTY JUST WOULDN'T BE COMPLETE WITHOUT PHAETON, LORD PROTECTOR OF CYNOSURE, THAT'S ALL!

YOUR APPETIZER, SYNDIC! SNAK SURPRISE.
HOPE UP TO QUALITY USUAL: CHAOS'S
YOU RUINED ME, SYNDIC!
WE WUZ PARTNERS, BUT YOU SWINDLED ME AN' LEFT ME TO ROT IN THE PIT!
WELL, NOW I'M PAYIN' YOU BACK!
GICK
PHAETON, I HATE TO BOTHER YOU--BUT I THINK THERE'S BEEN A MURDER, AND AS LORD PROTECTOR--
YOU SET THIS UP, CHAOS!
I DON'T CARE, COPPER! I DID IT-- AN' I'M GLAD!
SENTIENT, YOU ARE UNDER ARREST FOR MURDER!
SIGH COME ALONG WITH ME.
MURDER, MADAME HRAZAUR, IS SUCH AN UGLY THING--
--I DO HOPE IT DOESN'T SPOIL THE PARTY.
MOREOVER, THE SYNDIC'S DEATH LEAVES A VACANCY ON THE TELECOM/ TELEPORT GOVERNING BOARD-- HOWEVER WILL YOU MANAGE?
OH, I'M SURE--
--WE'LL BE ABLE TO MOUNT A SEARCH FOR A SUITABLE REPLACEMENT--!
SOME CIVIC-MINDED FELLOW LIKE MYSELF, YOU MEAN?

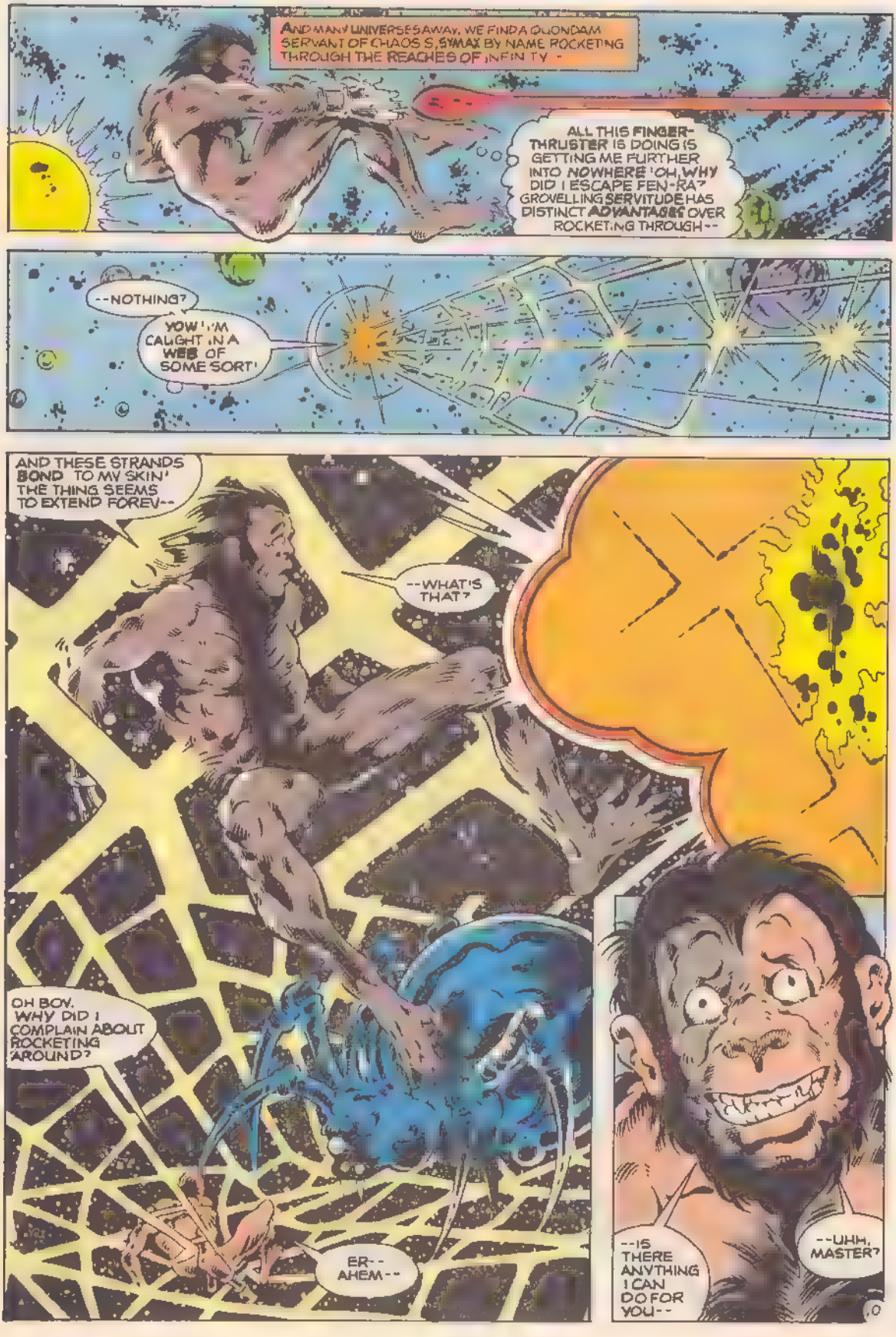

LATER, AFTER THE LAST GUEST HAS GONE--
VERY GOOD! WITH A SEAT ON THE TELECOM/ TELEPORT BOARD MY PLANS WILL AT LAST BEAR FRUIT!
ACTIVATE.
I TRUST YOU'RE ALL READY TO PUT OUR PLAN INTO PRACTICE?
YOU KNOW WE ARE, CHAOS. BEEN SITTING ON OUR...
FINE. MY APPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD SHOULD GO THROUGH IN ABOUT TWO HUNDRED HOURS. AND THEN THE HOLY CITY OF PEN-RA SHALL BE OURS FOR THE TAKING! OUT!
AND THANKS TO THESE SPECIAL GLOVES--*
* DEVELOPED IN WARP#14 --RICK.
--I AM ABLE TO HANDLE THIS LITTLE BAUBLE IN SAFETY!
AND THIS, IN TURN, HAS POWER ENOUGH--
--TO MAKE THE CENTER OF ULTIMATE POWER BOW DOWN TO ME ALONE!
5


I THOUGHT I'D FIND YOU PROWLING AROUND THE GATE TO FEN-RA, CHAOS! I KNOW WHAT YOUR INTENTIONS ARE--TO INVADE THAT DIMENSION AND PLUNDER IT!
NONSENSE! IT'S MERELY NOSTALGIA--IT WAS MY HOME FOR A FEW MILLENNIA, YOU KNOW!
YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME, CHAOS! THE GATE'S BEEN INTERDICTED!
AND THE SECURITY SYSTEMS BEEN UPDATED SINCE YOU LAST BROKE THROUGH IT.
ALLOW ME TO DEMONSTRATE.
IT IS RELATIVELY EASY TO ENTER THE GATE--I CAN THROW THIS APPLE IN--
--BUT IT CRUMBLES TO DUST. TIME IS SPEEDED UP TO TUNE OF A THOUSAND YEARS A SECOND.
AND THE MORE ENERGY THE OBJECT HAS, THE FASTER THE SPEED-UP.
THAT ISN'T MEANT AS A CHALLENGE, IS IT?
IT'S A WARNING. I'M WATCHING YOU, AND I DON'T MISS ANYTHING.
OH, I NEVER HAD ANY DOUBTS ABOUT THAT. SEE YOU SOON!
I AM A JERK

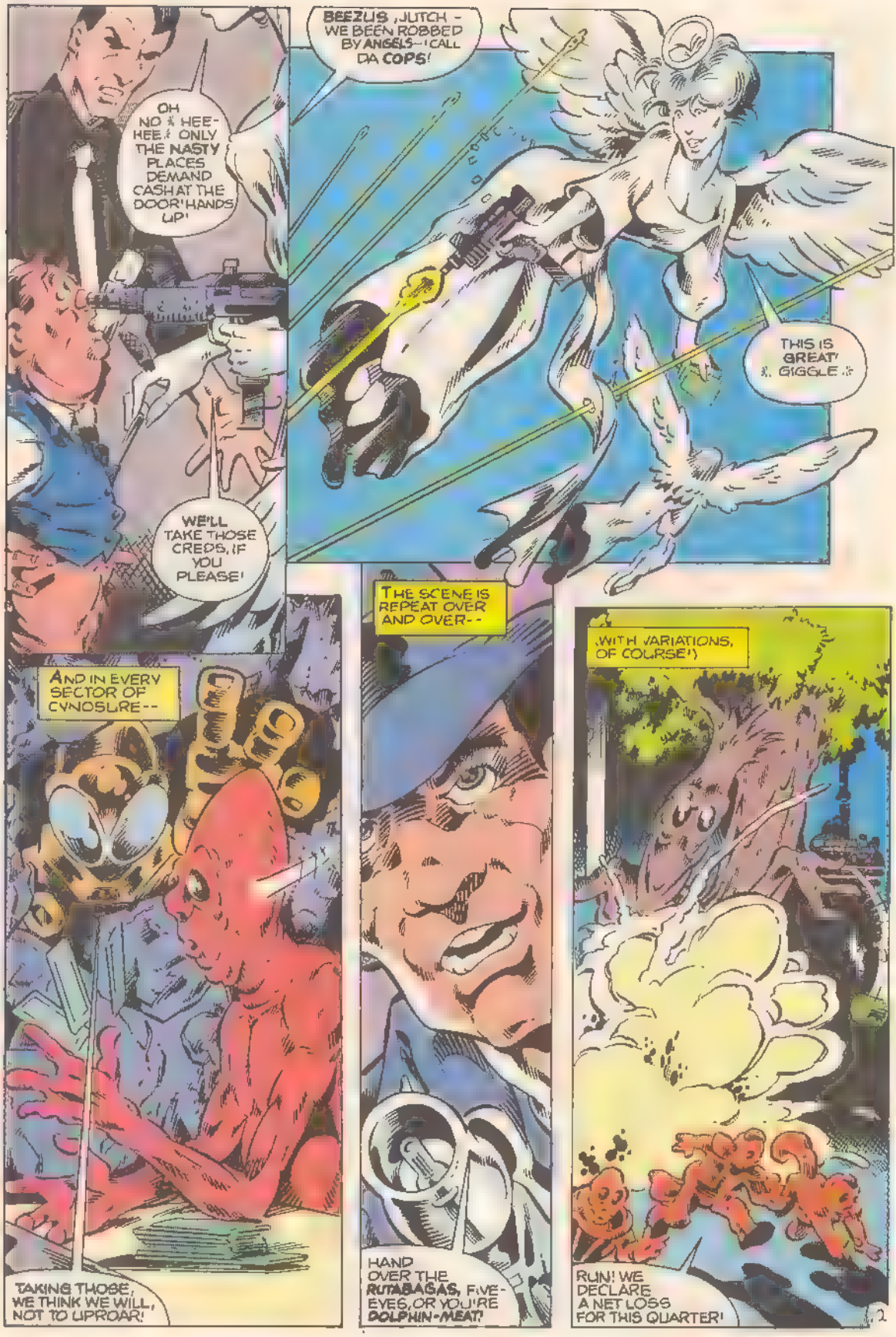

IN CYNOSURE, PHYSICAL LAWS TEND TO CHANGE FROM ONE BLOCK TO THE NEXT. THERE ARE AREAS WHERE SCIENCE WORKS, OTHERS WHERE MAGIC DOES, SOME WHERE BOTH WORK...
--AND IT IS TO ONE OF THE SORCEROUS PRECINCTS THAT CHAOS, PRINCE OF MADNESS MAKES HIS WAY.
GROOND! YOU WHO CALL YOURSELF SORCERER DELUXE! I CHALLENGE YOU TO A HIGH DUEL OF THE MYSTIC ARTS!
IS ANYBODY HOME?
THE TERM IS 'SORCERER SUPREME', MISCREANT! AND IF YOU INSIST ON INTERRUPTING MY RESEARCHES, I SHALL BE IN A VERY BAD MOOD AND BE FORCED TO CAST YOU INTO THE DARKNESS THAT WAS BEFORE THE WORLD!
SAMPLE THE MEREST FRACTION OF GROOND'S ERUDITE MIGHT!
THEY WERE RIGHT ABOUT YOU,
YOU'RE JUST WHAT I NEED!
BUT AS FOR SORCEROUS POWER, YOU'LL FIND ME YOUR EQUAL--AND MORE!


ONE DOES NOT CONSORT WITH THE INSECT SORCERESS VALARIA, HIGH PRIESTESS OF KLITHALU, AND COME AWAY EMPTY-HANDED!
I KNOW HER NAME--AND AM NOT IMPRESSED! YOU HANDLE THE ELDRITCH ENERGIES WITH NEITHER DEFTNESS NOR SKILL!
WHEREAS I AM A PAST MASTER!
FEEL --AS THE DEVILIGHT OF GRANN RAVENS YOU--AS THE STRENGTH-WITHOUT-BONES CRUSHES YOUR FRAME! FEEL--AND SUCCUMB!
YOU ARRRRE--A WORTHY OPPONENT INDEED! I CAN SEE HOW MY SKILL WOULDN'T STAND AGAINST YOURS--
--WERE IT NOT BACKED BY THE POWER OF THE SON OF HE WHO DREAMS--BY THE HEIR APPARENT OF GOD!
KNU

NO! YOUR BOLTS SHATTER MY PROTECTIONS! ALL LAWS OF SORCERY PALE BEFORE HE WHO DREAMS!
I AM LOST, STRANGER--SON OF GOD--I DWINDLE, AND AM CALLLLUGHHH.
A NEAT TRICK, EH, CAT? A PITY THIS SORT OF STUFF DOESN'T WORK IN MOST OF THE WORTHWHILE PLACES IN THE COSMOS--ONLY BACK-WATER SLUMS LIKE THIS.
STILL, THE NEXT PIECE TO MY PUZZLE DROPS NEATLY INTO PLACE.
--NO IT'S NOT TO PLAY WITH, CAT.
NOK NOK
THAT WILL BE THE PHONE MAN.
INSTALLATION ON ONE DELUXE COM-LINK --WHERE DO YOU WANT IT?
RIGHT THERE WILL BE FINE.
HONESTLY I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU GOT ALONG WITHOUT A PHONE, GROOND!
Junior Princess
COMO-LINK
DELIVER
SIGN HERE, MISTER.
BUT DON'T FRET, SORCERER: YOU WILL HAVE A MOST [illegible] TO PLAY IN THE EVENTS TO COME!


AND MANY UNIVERSES AWAY, WE FIND A QUONDAM SERVANT OF CHAOS S,SYMAX BY NAME ROCKETING THROUGH THE REACHES OF INFIN TY -
ALL THIS FINGER-THRUSTER IS DOING IS GETTING ME FURTHER INTO NOWHERE 'OH, WHY DID I ESCAPE FEN-RA? GROVELLING SERVITUDE HAS DISTINCT ADVANTAGES OVER ROCKETING THROUGH--
--NOTHING?
YOW! I'M CAUGHT IN A WEB OF SOME SORT!
AND THESE STRANDS BOND TO MY SKIN' THE THING SEEMS TO EXTEND FOREV--
--WHAT'S THAT?
OH BOY. WHY DID I COMPLAIN ABOUT ROCKETING AROUND?
ER-- AHEM--
--IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU--
--UHH, MASTER?

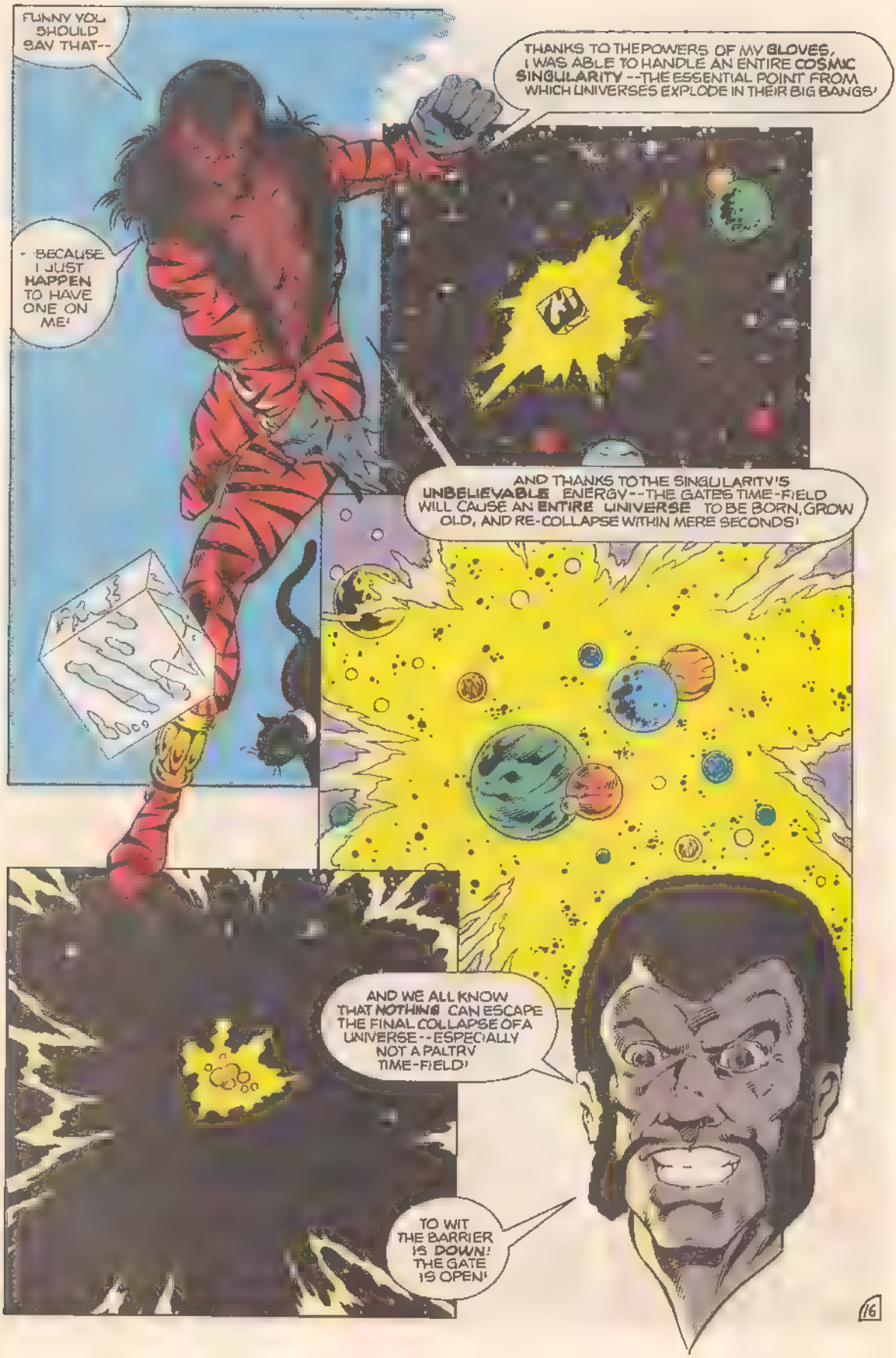
SOME TIME LATER, IN A LITTLE BAR IN CYNOSURE CALLED MUNDEN'S--
STATON'S VERY FINE SCOTCH WHISKEY AGED THREE WEEKS
--HAVEN'T SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS SINCE THE DEMON WARS. THE WHOLE PIT'S JUMPY
SOMETHING BIG'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN.
DRIIINK-- DRIIIIINK--
DOWN, BOB.
SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING GRIMMER'D BE INTERESTED IN. WHERE IS HE, GORDON?
DUNNO. OFF SOMEWHERE * DON'T LIKE ANY OF IT.
* FIND OUT FOR YOUR SELF N GRIMJACK #2 ON SALE NOW- RICK
AND, NOT VERY LONG AFTER AND NOT VERY FAR AWAY--
ABUSE-O-RAMA
SLOW NIGHT, EH?
ENTER
NO LIE, JUTCH, EVER SINCE BRINDISI'S WORLD WENT OUT OF OF PHASE--NUTHIN'!
HEY, HERE WE ARE, GIRLS! JUST THE PLACE WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR!
HOTCHA!
LADIES--LADIES-- THIS AIN'T--IT AIN'T SUITED TO YOUR KINDA PEOPLE!
WE GOT MORE TENDERHEARTED KINDS OF ESTABLISMENTS I KIN DIRECT YOU TO--!

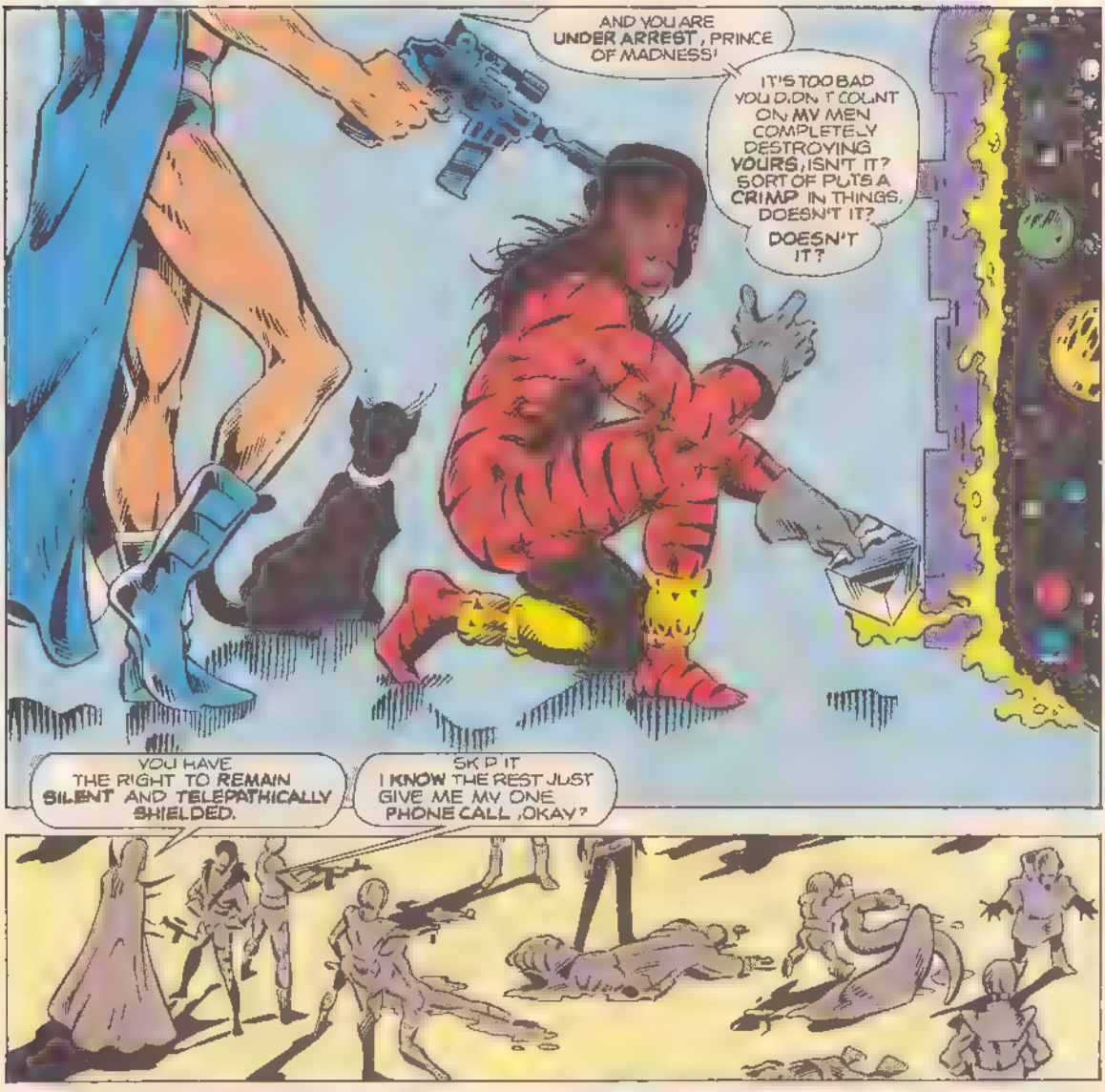

OH NO *HEE-HEE* ONLY THE NASTY PLACES DEMAND CASH AT THE DOOR! HANDS UP!
BEEZUS, JUTCH - WE BEEN ROBBED BY ANGELS--I CALL DA COPS!
THIS IS GREAT! *GIGGLE*
WE'LL TAKE THOSE CREDS, IF YOU PLEASE!
AND IN EVERY SECTOR OF CYNOSURE--
THE SCENE IS REPEAT OVER AND OVER--
(WITH VARIATIONS, OF COURSE!)
TAKING THOSE, WE THINK WE WILL, NOT TO UPROAR!
HAND OVER THE RUTABAGAS, FIVE-EYES, OR YOU'RE DOLPHIN-MEAT!
RUN! WE DECLARE A NET LOSS FOR THIS QUARTER!

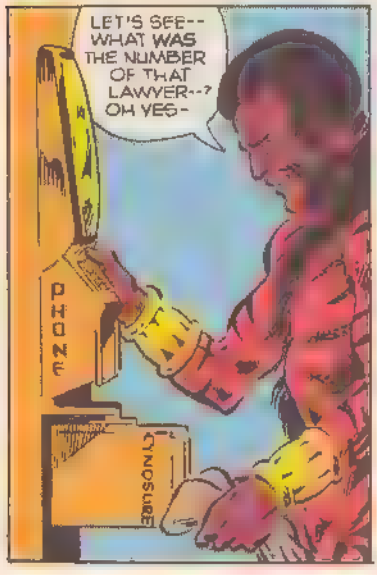
LORD PHAETON! WE'RE RECEIVING EMERGENCY CALLS FROM NEARLY 300 SECTORS AT ONCE! IT SEEMS AS IF CYNOSURE HAS JUST EXPLODED INTO A CRIME SPREE! WE'RE GOING TO BE SPREAD AWFULLY THIN--!
THIS IS CHAOS'S DOING, I KNOW IT! LIEUTENANT, SEND OUT JUST THE BARE MINIMUM FOR CONTAINMENT PURPOSES--AND EVERYONE ELSE WE CAN SPARE IS TO COME WITH ME!
"EMERGENCY, TELEPORT AUTHORIZATION - NOW! ALL UNITS CONVERGE ABSOLUTE SOONEST--"
"TERMINUS THE GATE TO PEN-RA."
AND PRAY TO HE WHO DREAMS WE'RE IN--
--TIME

I'M GLAD YOU DON'T MISS ANYTHING, LORD PHAETON--
--BECAUSE THIS IS GOING TO BE QUITE SPECTACULAR!

ALL UNITS! PROTECT THE GATE!
EASIER SHOUTED THAN DONE, MY LORD!
YAHOO! THROUGH! AND NOW FOR THE PAYDIRT!
YOU FOOL! STOP NOT UNTIL I--
YOU SEE, CHAOS? DO YOU SEE HOW YOUR FLUNKY'S GROUND INTO DUST BY TIME?
YOU MAY BEAT ALL OF US-- BUT IT'LL TAKE AN ETERNITY TO GET THROUGH THAT GATE! AN ETERNITY!


FUNNY YOU SHOULD SAY THAT--
THANKS TO THE POWERS OF MY GLOVES, I WAS ABLE TO HANDLE AN ENTIRE COSMIC SINGULARITY --THE ESSENTIAL POINT FROM WHICH UNIVERSES EXPLODE IN THEIR BIG BANGS!
--BECAUSE I JUST HAPPEN TO HAVE ONE ON ME!
AND THANKS TO THE SINGULARITY'S UNBELIEVABLE ENERGY--THE GATES TIME-FIELD WILL CAUSE AN ENTIRE UNIVERSE TO BE BORN, GROW OLD, AND RE-COLLAPSE WITHIN MERE SECONDS!
AND WE ALL KNOW THAT NOTHING CAN ESCAPE THE FINAL COLLAPSE OF A UNIVERSE--ESPECIALLY NOT A PALTRY TIME-FIELD!
TO WIT THE BARRIER IS DOWN! THE GATE IS OPEN!


AND YOU ARE UNDER ARREST, PRINCE OF MADNESS!
IT'S TOO BAD YOU DIDN'T COUNT ON MY MEN COMPLETELY DESTROYING YOURS, ISN'T IT? SORT OF PUTS A CRIMP IN THINGS, DOESN'T IT? DOESN'T IT?
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT AND TELEPATHICALLY SHIELDED.
SKIP IT I KNOW THE REST JUST GIVE ME MY ONE PHONE CALL, OKAY?


LET'S SEE-- WHAT WAS THE NUMBER OF THAT LAWYER--? OH YES-
PHONE
CONSOLE

GROOND! BY CHAOS'S MASTERY OVER YOU, YOU ARE COMPELLED TO ACT AS YOU HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED!
BY HIS MASTERY, I ACT!
CHAOS! WHAT THIS?!?

WHY IT'S APRIL FOOL, LORD PHAETON!

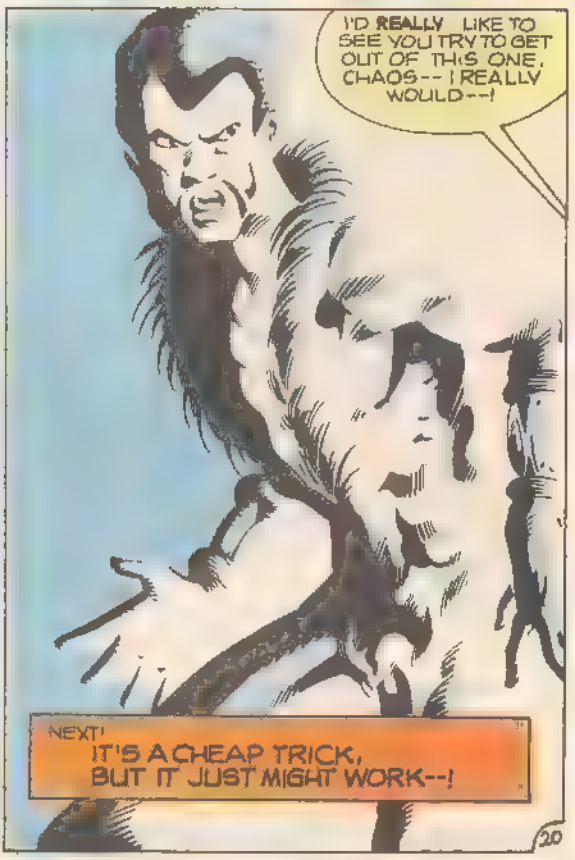
IT'S VERY SIMPLE, MY LORD! MY DECOY OPENED THE GATE-- AND THEN, THANKS TO MY MEMBERSHIP ON THE TELECOM/ TELEPORT BOARD, I SET UP AN ILLEGAL PORT LINK TO A SORCERY SECTOR--
CALL INTER-RUPTED
--ENABLING ME AND MY DEMONS TO OVERWHELM YOUR UNPREPARED FORCES AND POUR THROUGH INTO FEN-RA WITHOUT RESISTANCE!
AND WELL MAY YOU ASK, "WHERE DOES HE GET HIS CRAZY IDEAS?!!
IT'LL GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO PONDER WHILE THE DEMONS ARE TEARING YOU APART!
TA-TA!

GRIND UP FOOLISH PROTECTOR AND SUCK HIS SOUL OUT--HEY!
CHEATED! IS GOT NO SOUL--IS STUPID ANDROID!
TWO CAN PLAY THIS GAME, CHAOS!
AND NOW, MY WEIRDLINGS WE WILL RAPE THE CITY OF FEN-RA IN A WAY IT WILL NEVER--
NO!! IT CAN'T BE--BUT WE'RE BACK IN MY OWN PALACE--!!
HOW? IT WAS PERFECT--PERFECT--!!
YES, PERFECT--UNLESS YOU HAVE AN OPPONENT WHO MANAGES TO STAY ONE STEP AHEAD OF YOU. I KNEW YOUR POWER MIGHT BE TOO GREAT FOR US TO STOP--SO I DIVERTED THE GATE BACK INTO CYNOSURE--AND RIGHT INTO MY FINAL TRAP!
YOU'LL FIND YOU'RE COMPLETELY SURROUNDED, PRINCE OF MADNESS--AND FOR THE LAST TIME, YOU ARE UNDER ARREST--!

NOT SO FAST! YOU RECKON WITHOUT THE ELDRITCH POWER OF MY DEMON-HORDE! ADVANCE, MY MINIONS, AND SHOW THEM WHAT IT MEANS TO--

--THREATEN --CHAOS--?
OH NO-- I FORGOT MY PALACE IS IN A SECTOR WHERE MAGIC DOES'NT WORK--!

YOU ARE CHARGED WITH ATTEMPTED SABOTAGE, MURDER, THEFT AND ILLEGAL USE OF A TELEPHONE, PRINCE! YOU'RE GOING TO SPEND ETERNITY IN JAIL!
AND IF YOU TRY TO ESCAPE, MY MEN WILL GLEEFULLY DISINTEGRATE YOU!


I'D REALLY LIKE TO SEE YOU TRY TO GET OUT OF THIS ONE, CHAOS-- I REALLY WOULD--!
NEXT! IT'S A CHEAP TRICK, BUT IT JUST MIGHT WORK--!

FIRST NOTES

HOW TO PRODUCE COMIC BOOKS

We've received a few letters asking us why we moved our advertising pages and text features from the back pages of our books to scattered inside pages a few months ago.

If you were to pull out the staples of this comic book and cut up the pages, you would have ruined a perfectly good comic book that some day might be worth a great deal of money. So for our little experiment, please go out and buy another copy of this comic. While you're at it, buy ten or twenty and pass the extras out to your friends. I'll wait.

OK. Now that you've cut each page out, see if you can rearrange them in the order the printer prints them: eight pages on one sheet of paper, four on each side. Each side is called a "flat." There are a number of different ways you can place the pages, and our printers pick from two: 1-32-4-29, 31-2-30-3, 5-28-8-25, 27-6-26-7, 9-24-12-21, 23-10-22-11, 13-20-16-18, and 19-14-18-15; or 25-8-32-1, 5-28-4-29, 31-2-26-7, 3-30-6-27, 17-16-24-9, 13-20-12-21, 23-10-18-15, and 11-22-14-19. Sort of like origami.

We have the option of using any of these flats in each of our books, and we save a great deal of time placing the four pages we run across-the-board on the same flat and running that flat in all of our books.

Our production department saves a great deal of time — we only have to make four photostats instead of 28, we only have to paste up four, and we only have to color four. Our engravers only have to provide one set of separations instead of seven.

We save a great deal of time, and that saves us money. That effects you in one of two ways: it puts off a price increase (given all other factors remain the same, like paper and number of story pages), and it allows us to produce a wider variety of comics. It's cheap to run a comic book company if half your line is full of ersatz teenage mutant superhero superteam books.

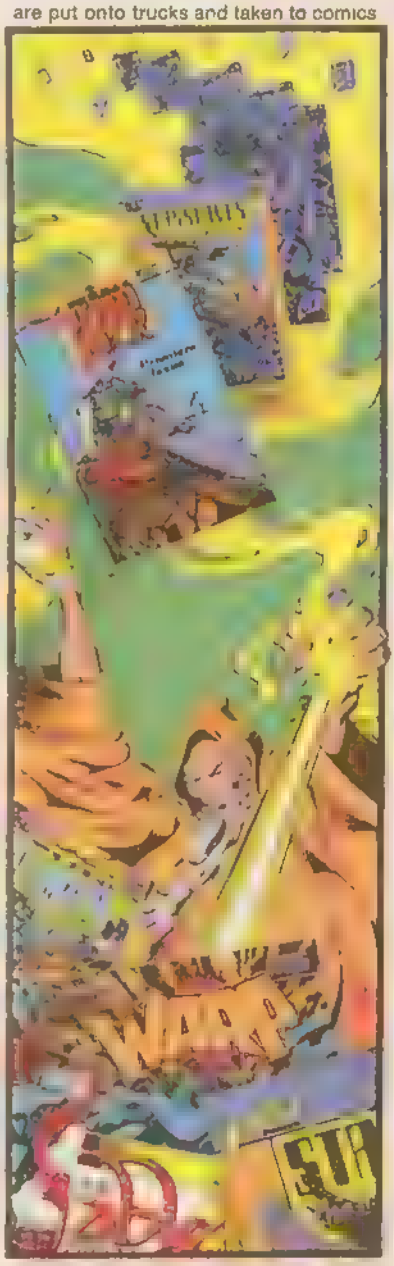
There are other ways to keep costs down, but using across-the-board ad flats is the most common (most publishers do it) and the least offensive.

And that's why we've been running the letters page on the inside front cover — with an across-the-board ad flat, only the inside covers remain open.

HOW TO MAIL COMIC BOOKS

OK, we can make a lot of jokes about the post office, but if you are a subscriber to First Comics — or to any other direct sale comic book — please keep in mind it is impossible for us to mail your subscription copy before the comics shops get them.

Direct sales comics ship once a week, are put onto trucks and taken to comics



distributors generally get the books on Thursdays, and their stores get them sometime over the following several days.

We do not get our office copies before the shops get theirs — sometimes it takes a week or two. When they come in, we stuff them into our nifty manilla envelopes and shlep them over to the post office, which is one-half block away.

Lord knows what the post office does with them.

But in any event, you will always be able to get direct sales comics at a comic book shop earlier than you would by subscription. Quite frankly, we barely break even with our subs, and we only offer them as a service to those folks who do not live near a comic book store.

If you're getting your subscription copies more than two weeks after the stores, you might want to talk to your local post office.

And you thought publishing comic books was all fun and games.

— Mike Gold

FIRST IN MAY

American Flagg! #12: The Videorangers are all set, and Flagg's jumping squarely into the middle of the heart-pounding conclusion to "Solidarity ... For Now!"

E-Man #18: As E-Man is wisked back to the days of the Chicago Fire, Mauser encounters ... Angel! Time travelling thrills and detective chills combine for "Rosemary — and Time!"

Grimjack #2: Ostrander and Truman take John Gaunt back to the gladiator's ring for a knock-down drag-out battle with ButcherBoy! And **Rick Veitch** kicks off our new Munden's Bar series with the tale of an eight year old humanoid slug named "Jeffy."

Jon Sable, Freelance #16: The title sez it all! By popular demand — "The Return of the Cat."

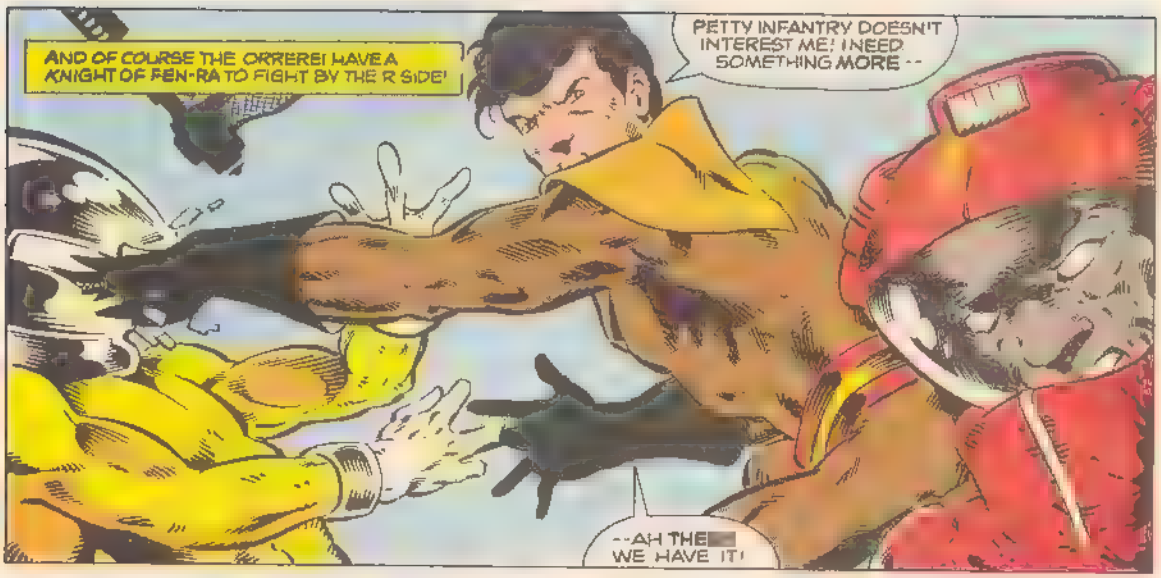
Mars #9: The booklength conclusion to the three-part World War saga! All-out battle as the Expeditionary Crew fights for its survival and Morganna is betrayed by her closest friend!

Starslayer #20: Torin is dying, while "Morrigan lives!" And — fresh from the pages of Mars, The Black Flame moves over to Starslayer this month with the story that tells us "Who is the Black Flame?"

Warp #16: Chaos Prince of Madness loses his head in the culmination of the most convoluted caper that only his contorted brain could concoct: "A Night in Cynosure!"

OUTRIDER
THE DOOR INTO DOOMSDAY!
I HOPE YOUR JOURNEY WAS A PAINLESS ONE-- BECAUSE WE'RE ABOUT TO MAKE UP FOR IT!
THE FORCES OF THE IRON STAR WERE WAITING FOR US WHEN WE MATERIALIZED, OUTRIDER!
SO WE HAVE LOST THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE- STILL WE MUST FIGHT!
RIGHT! FOR ORRERY-- AND HONOR!
PETER B. GILLIS •STORY
BILL WILLINGHAM •PENCILS
MIKE GUSTOVICH •INKS
RICK TAYLOR •LETTERS
JANICE COHEN •COLORS
RICK OLIVER •EDITOR

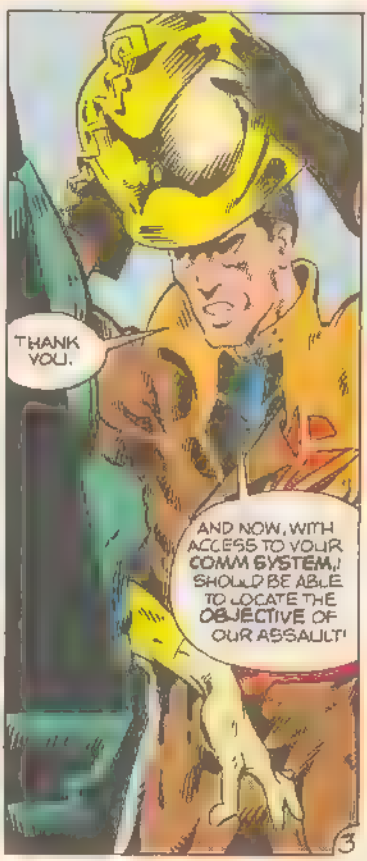
OBLITERATE THEM!
AND THE BATTLE IS JOINED!
MOST OF THE ORRERE! DO NOT HAVE THE TOUGHNESS OF THE MAN OUTRIDER OR THE BIRD ARCHANGEL--
-AND SO THE INITIAL ASSAULT ON THEM IS BRUTAL--AND TRAGIC--
BUT THE WARRIORS SOON FIGHT BACK WITH BOTH FEROCITY AND SKILL AGAINST THE FORCES WHO HAVE LONG PLUNDERED THEIR STAR-SYSTEM--
--AND THE OUTCOME OF THE BATTLE-- ONE-SIDED AS IT MAY BE IN NUMBERS-- IS SUDDENLY IN DOUBT!

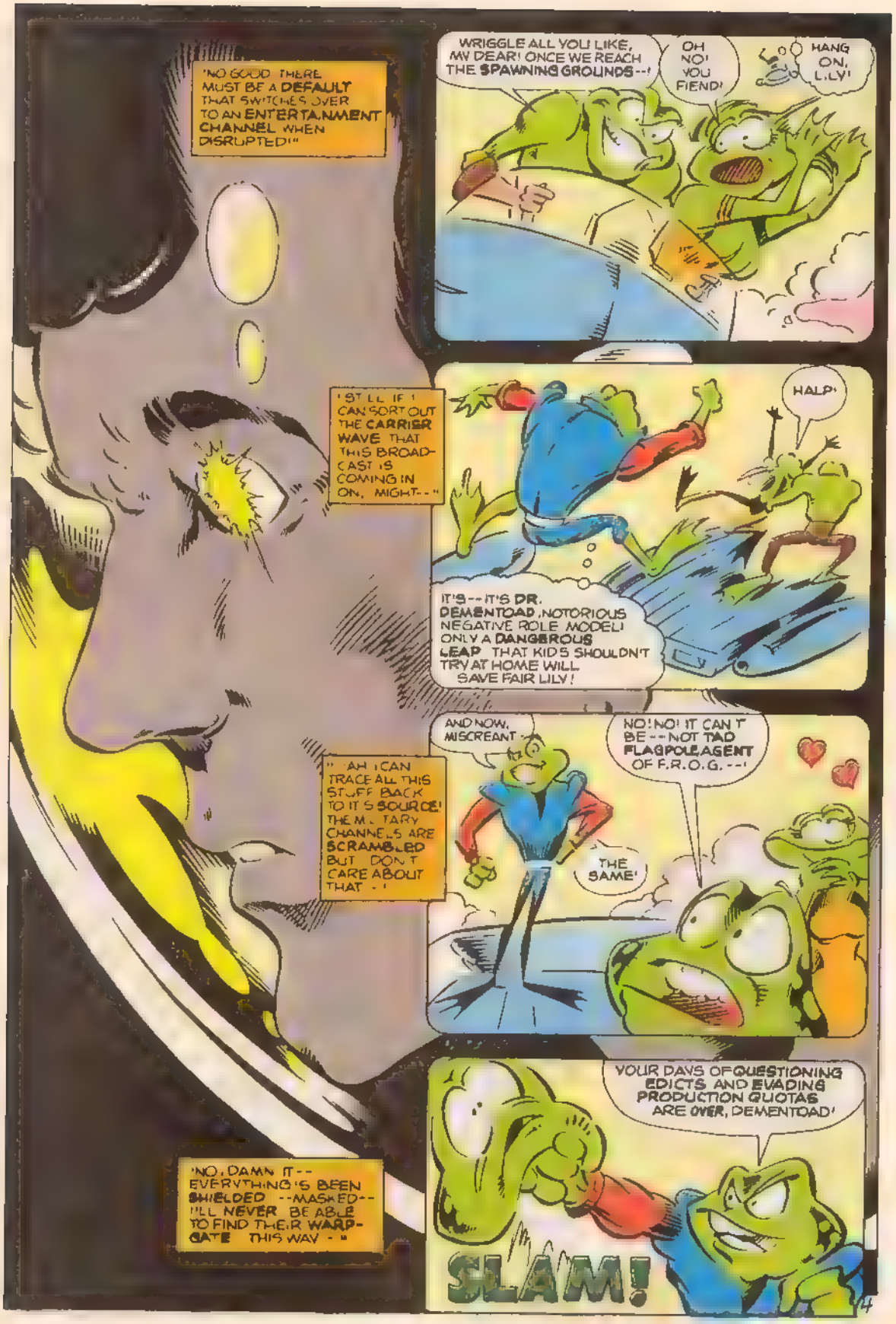

AND OF COURSE THE ORRERE! HAVE A KNIGHT OF REN-RA TO FIGHT BY THE R SIDE!
PETTY INFANTRY DOESN'T INTEREST ME! I NEED SOMETHING MORE --
--AH THE[redacted] WE HAVE IT!

SARGE--! I'M HITTING THE ALIEN WITH A POINT-BLANK MEGA-DISCHARGE AND HE JUST RUNS THROUGH IT! PLEASE ADVISE --!

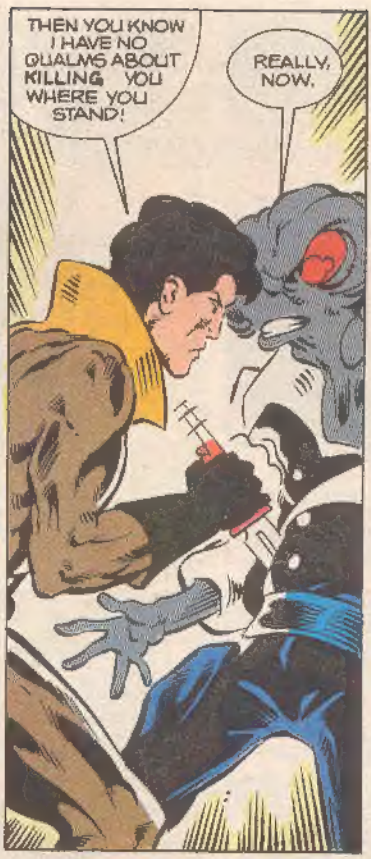
ARMOR SHOULD BE--NGH--COORDINATED--
AND NOW HE'S SLICING THROUGH OUR SHIELDING WITH A KNIFE! PLEASE ADVISE!

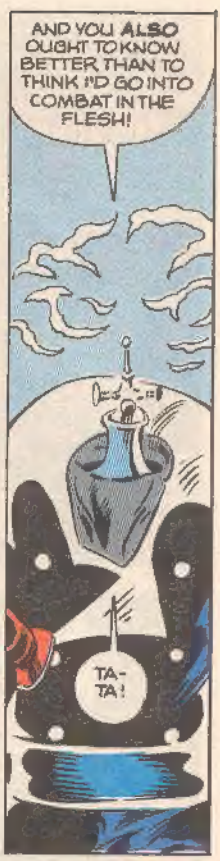
PLEASE-- UH- OH
EVENING. NICE HELMET YOU HAVE THERE


THANK YOU.
AND NOW, WITH ACCESS TO YOUR COMM SYSTEM, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO LOCATE THE OBJECTIVE OF OUR ASSAULT!
3


"NO GOOD THERE MUST BE A DEFAULT THAT SWITCHES OVER TO AN ENTERTAINMENT CHANNEL WHEN DISRUPTED!"
WRIGGLE ALL YOU LIKE, MY DEAR! ONCE WE REACH THE SPAWNING GROUNDS--!
OH NO! YOU FIEND!
HANG ON, LILY!
"STILL IF I CAN SORT OUT THE CARRIER WAVE THAT THIS BROADCAST IS COMING IN ON, MIGHT--"
HALP!
IT'S--IT'S DR. DEMENTOAD, NOTORIOUS NEGATIVE ROLE MODEL! ONLY A DANGEROUS LEAP THAT KIDS SHOULDN'T TRY AT HOME WILL SAVE FAIR LILY!
"AH! I CAN TRACE ALL THIS STUFF BACK TO IT'S SOURCE! THE MILITARY CHANNELS ARE SCRAMBLED BUT DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT--!
AND NOW, MISCREANT--
NO! NO! IT CAN'T BE--NOT TAD FLAGPOLE AGENT OF F.R.O.G.--!
THE SAME!
"NO, DAMN IT-- EVERYTHING'S BEEN SHIELDED --MASKED-- I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO FIND THEIR WARP-GATE THIS WAY--"
YOUR DAYS OF QUESTIONING EDICTS AND EVADING PRODUCTION QUOTAS ARE OVER, DEMENTOAD!
SLAM!

SHAME, SHAME, OUTRIDER! YOU OUGHT TO THINK BETTER OF US THAN TO EXPECT WE'D FALL PREY TO THE SAME TACTIC TWICE! *
THE COMMANDER--?
CALL ME GRNOUV! OH, YES WE KNOW ALL ABOUT LORD REGULUS, LEGENDARY EXILE FROM THE HOLY CITY OF FEN-RA!
* SEE WARP #14--R.O.


THEN YOU KNOW I HAVE NO QUALMS ABOUT KILLING YOU WHERE YOU STAND!
REALLY, NOW.


AND YOU ALSO OUGHT TO KNOW BETTER THAN TO THINK I'D GO INTO COMBAT IN THE FLESH!
TA-TA!

ON THE CONTRARY, GRNOUV, THAT'S JUST WHAT I DID THINK!!
THE QUICKEST WAY TO FOOL SOMEONE IS TO ALLOW HIM TO DO SOMETHING CLEVER. NOW WE JUST ACTIVATE THIS TRANSMITTER AND--

ARCHANGEL!! I WANT YOU TO READ THE BEAM-PATH FROM THIS DEVICE SO WE CAN TELL WHERE THE COMMANDER'S HOLOGRAM WENT!
DO IT YOURSELF, OUTRIDER! IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED, WE'RE FIGHTING FOR OUR LIVES!

ARCHANGEL, I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR YOUR PETTY SPITE!
I CAN FORCE YOUR OBEDIENCE-- AND I WILL! COME HERE!

VERY WELL. MAKING CONTACT.
THE REST OF YOU-- TO ME! WE'RE FIGHTING A A SENSELESS BATTLE HERE--
"BUT, ONCE ARCH HAS TRACED THE BEAM TO THEIR NERVE-CENTER --"
I HAVE IT, MY LORD. DONE.
--OUR MISSION MAY STILL SUCCEED! ARCH-- CAN YOU 'PORT US THERE?
AS YOU COMMAND MY LORD!
AND HERE WE ARE! HERE IS THE WARP-GATE THROUGH WHICH THE IRON STAR GETS ITS UNLIMITED SUPPLY OF RESOURCES AND WEAPONRY! HERE IS THE FACTOR THAT HAS TIPPED YOUR WAR IN THEIR FAVOR! AND HERE WE SHALL FIND VICTORY!
GRNOUY, YOU IDIOT! HOW COULD YOU LET THIS HAPPEN?
THEY'LL NEVER LEAVE HERE ALIVE, GREAT ONE!
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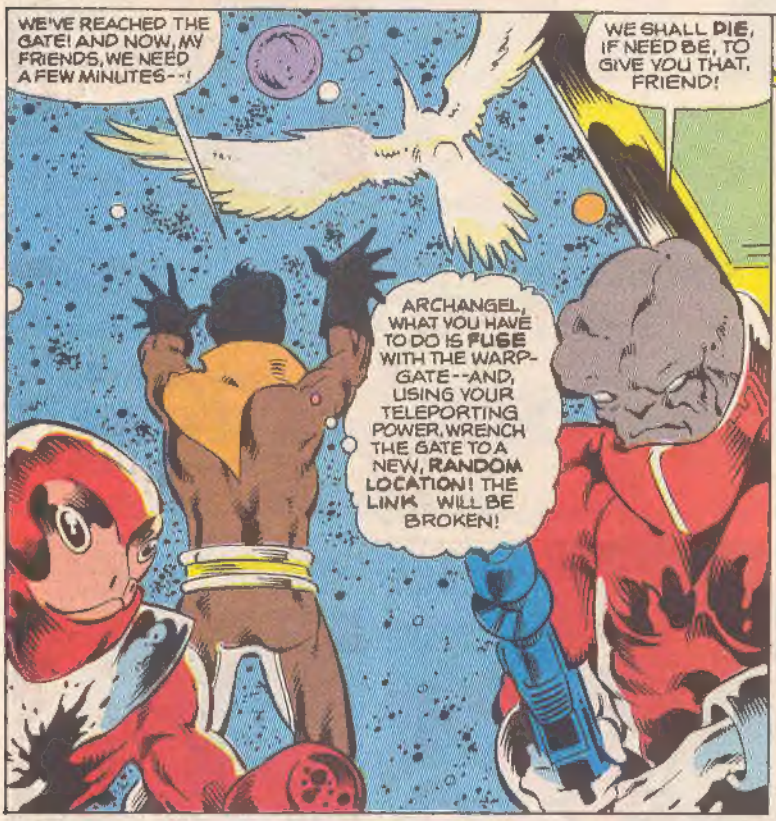
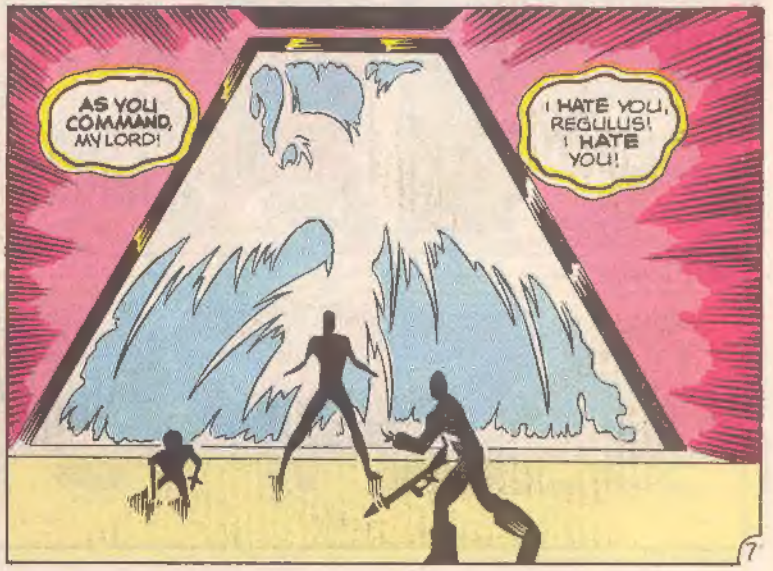
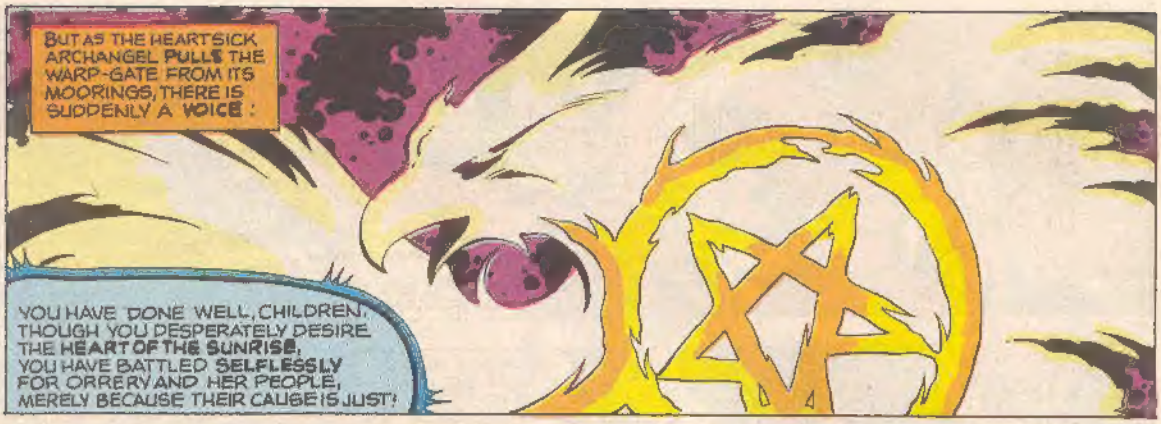
NOTHING WILL STOP US NOW, GRNOUV!

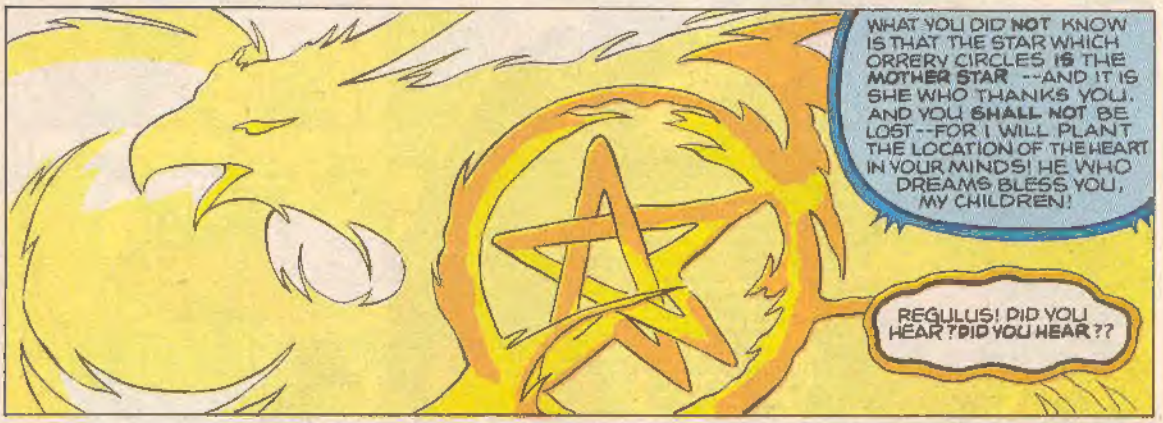

WE'VE REACHED THE GATE! AND NOW, MY FRIENDS, WE NEED A FEW MINUTES--!
WE SHALL DIE, IF NEED BE, TO GIVE YOU THAT, FRIEND!
ARCHANGEL, WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO IS FUSE WITH THE WARP-GATE--AND, USING YOUR TELEPORTING POWER, WRENCH THE GATE TO A NEW, RANDOM LOCATION! THE LINK WILL BE BROKEN!

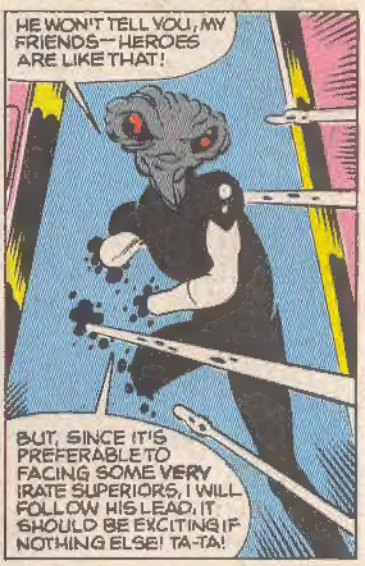
THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO RE-ESTABLISH CONTACT--BUT NEITHER WILL WE!
MY LORD, WE CAME HERE SEARCHING FOR THE MOTHER STAR--AND IF WE DO THIS WE SHALL BE LOST AMONG THE DIMENSIONS OF INFINITY! OUR QUEST SHALL NEVER BE FULFILLED!

THAT DOESNIT MATTER, MY LADY! OUR DUTY AS NOBLES OF FEN-RA IS TO HELP THE OPPRESSED--
--NO MATTER THE COST TO OURSELVES! WE DO IT!


AS YOU COMMAND, MY LORD!
I HATE YOU, REGULUS! I HATE YOU!







NEXT ISSUE:

SARGON!™